

APPROVED

Rockville Environment Commission Minutes of the Meeting of Thursday, October 1, 2015

Diamondback Conference Room, City Hall,
111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, Maryland

Attendance

Commissioners Present: John Becker, Steve Cardon, Alicia Hosmer, Amanda Matheny, Lea Rosenbohm, Steve Sprague, and Helen Triolo.

Commissioners Absent: Clark Reed

City Staff: Erica Shingara (Environmental Management)

Guests: Brenda Platt, Institute of Local Self-Reliance

Meeting Commencement and Introductions

The meeting convened at 7:07 pm by Acting Chair Becker. The guest presenter was introduced: Brenda Platt, Director of the Composting Makes \$en\$e Project, for the Institute of Local Self-Reliance (ILSR).

Meeting Agenda Review and Revision

None.

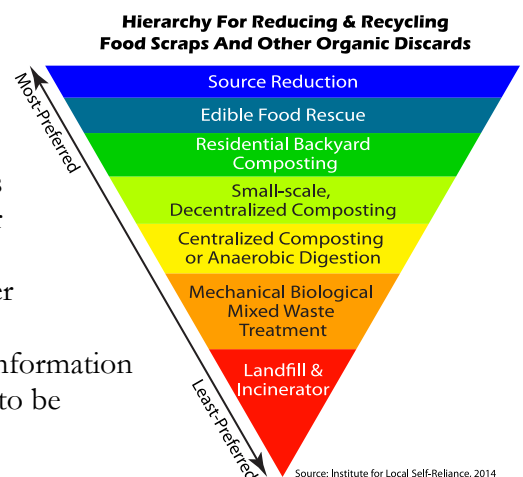
Approval of Meeting Minutes

The September meeting minutes were not discussed; they will be considered at the November meeting.

Composting Presentation

Commissioner Sprague explained that the Recycling and Composting Committee invited Ms. Platt to speak to the Commission on composting options available to local communities. Ms. Platt provided an overview of the ILSR and described a range of composting options and programs across the country; from backyard composting, to smaller onsite community systems (such as in community gardens, schools or parks), to larger collection systems that transport materials to centralized offsite centers. She described ILSR's hierarchy for food scraps and organic discards (see image) and the benefits of community-based systems that keep the process and products as local as possible. Ms. Platt also provided examples of model programs, composting technologies, outreach materials, training and other resources available to help communities start composting programs. Commissioner Sprague suggested that the Commission further explore composting options suitable for Rockville; which may include composting education for homeowners or small-scale systems at a community garden. The Commission expressed interest in this topic and will conduct further research.

- **Action Item:** Helen Triolo will contact Ms. Plat for more information about community composting, training, costs, options, etc. to be brought back for discussion at a future meeting.



Proposed Revisions to Forest and Tree Preservation Ordinance (FTPO)

Since the last meeting, Commissioner Rosenbohm revised the FTPO memo to include comments from the September meeting and recirculated the draft revised memo. Commissioner Matheny indicated that she had not received the draft because of an incorrect email address. Commissioners Cardon and Becker provided comments. The draft revised memo with these comments was circulated at the meeting. The FTPO is not scheduled to be brought back to the Mayor and Council prior to the next Commission meeting. The Commission discussed the process for submitting the memo and whether to submit it before or after the election. Commissioner Triolo moved and Commissioner Rosenbohm seconded the motion to incorporate these changes into a draft final memo for the Commission to review and consider for approval at the November 5th meeting. The Commission discussed the revision process, timing and signature for the submission, and whether to comment on the amendment made for Montgomery College and/or all of the proposed revisions. The motion passed (6, 1).

- **Action Item:** Commissioner Rosenbohm will revise and email the draft final memo to the Commission for review and comments; Commissioners will email her any additional comments prior to the next meeting; and then the final memo will be brought to the November 5th meeting for consideration for approval.

Solar Proposal for City Facilities

Erica Shingara provided an update on a solar proposal for City facilities. The project dates back to 2012 when EPA provided a solar consultant to conduct a solar feasibility study. The study identified four City facilities as potential candidates for solar canopies over existing parking lots under a solar power purchase agreement (SPPA). The City has an opportunity to utilize Montgomery County's SPPA contract to develop turn-key photovoltaic systems at one or more City facilities with no up-front capital costs. Under the SPPA, SolarCity can take advantage of significant federal and state incentives on behalf of the City and use them to reduce the price of electricity to levels below the City's current electricity rates with no annual escalator; thus providing a net operating savings. Staff will be presenting the solar proposal to the Mayor and Council on October 12, 2015 and recommending moving forward first with the Gude maintenance facility because it is the most feasible to implement within the limited SPPA contract timeframe. Given that the Thomas Farm Community Center, Mattie JT Stepanek Park, and the Swim and Fitness Center are located near residential neighborhoods, additional stakeholder coordination will be needed to implement these projects. Commissioner Hosmer moved and Commissioner Matheny seconded the motion to endorse moving forward with solar at the Gude facility first and support future installations at the other sites. The motion passed unanimously.

Environment Commission Budget

The Commission reviewed a spreadsheet that included the FY 2016 budget request from the Watershed Committee, a summary of past expenditures, and an update on current supply inventories. Budget requests are still pending from the Recycling and Composting, Energy, and Sustainability Committees. Commissioners Rosenbohm and Hosmer requested that the Commission purchase shirts for identification when they are volunteering at public outreach events.

- **Action Item:** Erica Shingara will research shirt costs for inclusion in the budget requests.

- **Action Item:** Committees will submit their budget requests to Erica Shingara prior to budget discussion at the November 5th meeting.

Backyard Habitats

Commission Hosmer reported on the status of the City's community wildlife habitat certification. The City has met the minimum common area requirements (worth 3 points per site), met the minimum school requirements (worth 5 points per site), and needs up to 14 more homes to meet the minimum home requirements (worth 1 point per site). The City also needs approximately 30 more points through a combination of sites to achieve final certification. She recommended the following strategy to achieve certification: continue to do homeowner outreach at the Farmer's Market to recruit homes; contact schools, such as Richard Montgomery and Beal Elementary, to encourage them to participate; pursue at least a one-time Environmental Excellence Award for Backyard Habitat to honor James Farrelly; and review the requirements of the Mayors' Monarch Pledge, a new program by the National Wildlife Federation to save the declining monarch butterfly. Commissioner Hosmer moved and Commissioner Triolo seconded a motion to pursue at least a one-time Environmental Excellence Award for Backyard Habitats in honor of James Farrelly. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Action Item:** Commissioner Hosmer will send out a summary of backyard habitat talking points to assist the Commission in outreach; schedule volunteers for a Farmer's Market booth; and forward information to the Commission on the Monarch Pledge

Maryvale Stream Cleanup

Commission Matheny has finalized arrangements for the Maryvale stream cleanup on October 24. Volunteers are requested from 10:30 a.m. until noon. She has coordinated with EMD on materials and will bring the signs and cleanup supplies to the event.

Environment Management Update

Erica Shingara reviewed upcoming items:

- Re-appointments and vacancies: Commissioner Rosenbohm was reappointed in September. Scott Clausen has moved away and officially resigned from the Commission. The City is advertising to fill the current vacancy and applications will be forwarded to the Commission.
- The Rainscapes Rewards program expands in October to include homeowners associations, condominium associations and other non-profits.
- The solar proposal, Watts Branch Watershed Study, and amendments to the Water Quality Protection Ordinance are scheduled for the October 12, 2015 Mayor and Council meeting.
- The Cabin John stream monitoring site is available for a group to conduct stream monitoring. The Watershed Committee will coordinate with Shannon Philbin for more information to determine if the Commission should consider monitoring this site.

New Business

- The Recycling and Compost Committee will now meet at 7 p.m. instead of 8 p.m.
- Clarification of Commissioner Matheny's email for future correspondence.
- Commissioner Matheny reminded the Commission that the Upper Watts Branch field meeting is scheduled for Saturday. They will be reviewing the 3 outfall stabilizations and 4 spot stream stabilizations. They anticipate beginning construction in the spring of 2016.

Adjourn

The Commission adjourned by acclamation at 9:00 p.m.

Next Commission Meeting

The next Commission meeting is tentatively scheduled for **Thursday, November 5, 2015 at 7:00 pm** in the **Diamondback Conference Room at the Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville Maryland 20850-2321**. The public is invited to attend.